

VETERANS NEWSLETTER



BERGEN
NEW JERSEY County

4th Quarter 2016

Volume 39

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County Executive

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From the desk of the County Executive—James J. Tedesco, III



Although these are wounds that are still healing for many of us, it is our faith in God and in each other that carries us through and helps restore us.

May God bless those who have suffered as prisoners of war and those who are missing in action, and may God continue to comfort their families going forward. They will always have a place in our hearts.

Veterans have long been an important part of Bergen County and always will be. Those who have served our country have gone on to make incredible contributions in business, medicine, government, law enforcement, the arts, the media and every other industry in our 70 municipalities. Your commitment and dedication to community and public service speaks volumes about who you are which is why we were so proud to have been certified as having ended homelessness among veterans in Bergen County through the “Mayor’s Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness” – a remarkable nationwide initiative to help the brave soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and reservists that are homeless find permanent homes. This accomplishment is proof positive of our commitment to help our Veterans and their families when they return from their service.

On September 16, we also hosted a POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony to honor and remember those who have suffered in defense of American freedom. May God bless those who have suffered as prisoners of war and those who are missing in action, and may God continue to comfort their families going forward. They will always have a place in our hearts.

Since becoming County Executive in January 2015, we have implemented numerous successful initiatives to help veterans receive the job training, education, health care and social services they need to lead happier, healthier lives, and we are committed to brainstorming more new ways to continue helping our veteran population. You are the reason why we enjoy the many freedoms we have today and that is why we will never stop working for you and your families.

From the desk of the Director of Veterans Services ~ A.J. Luna

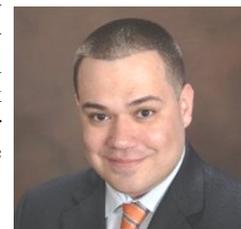


I hope everyone has enjoyed their summer. It went by very quickly and we are looking forward to another fall and winter. Bergen County was certified by the Federal Government as “**Having ended homelessness among veterans**”. In August 2016 Bergen County was just the **28th community** in the country to get recognized for this effort and to earn this remarkable distinction. We participated in the “**Mayor’s Challenge to end veteran homelessness**”. The County of Bergen we are very proud that we have been able to accomplish this for our veterans.

We have had the great opportunity of working with some awesome strategic partners in our fight to assist each and every resident veteran in obtaining affordable and permanent housing. With this being said, it is imperative that we continue our efforts. In the next few months, we will partner with organizations to conduct resource drives to make sure our veterans have what they need for the winter and we welcome anyone in the community.

Even though we earned this accolade, we know that there is always a possibility that a veteran and their family may end up on hard times. If you personally know anyone in this situation, please have them call us at 201-336-6325 or they can e-mail us at veterans@co.bergen.nj.us. The Division will continue to work diligently to ensure that homelessness does not even get a chance to begin with our support systems in place. You are a big part of that support system and for that we thank you!

I would like to wish everyone a very Happy Holiday Season.



United We Stand
SEPTEMBER 11, 2001



TRANSPORTATION FOR VETERANS

Bergen County
Division of Community Transportation
201-368-5955

Call to learn more about the various transportation options available to our veterans.



- The Division of Veterans Services was established in 1977 to provide resident veterans and their dependents with information and assistance in obtaining earned entitlements from federal, state, and local governments, as well as any that are available from the private sector. Through a quarterly newsletter and direct client contact, the division provides Bergen's veterans organizations and their auxiliaries and individual residents with up-to-date benefit information.

Daily activities include:

Directing requests for VA compensation

- Supply information on pensions, home loans
- Information on burial and Memorial benefits
- Education and Training programs availability
- Lost military separation papers
- Forms for military medals and records
- Maintaining a list of available employment opportunities
- Making referrals to other agencies whenever necessary



TRACERS WANTS TO END HOMELESSNESS FOR VETERANS IN BERGEN COUNTY BY HELPING HOMELESS VETERANS AND VETERANS IN DANGER OF BECOMING HOMELESS, AND GIVING A HAND UP TO HOMELESS VETS, NOT A HANDOUT. WORKING TOGETHER, WE CAN DO IT.

Bergen County Military Service Medal

Bergen County offers a service medal to all county residents, currently living or who died in the county, who have been honorably discharged from the U.S. military. The Bergen County Military Service Medal will also be awarded posthumously to county residents.

Hire a Vet Program Phone: 201-336-6326

The division maintains a list of available employment opportunities, and regularly calls on industry and organizations seeking employment opportunities for veterans. Staff attempts to match the veteran with employer needs.

Bergen County Clerk's Office

The Honorable John S. Hogan ~ Bergen County Clerk

To obtain a Veteran's Honorary Service card, Veterans must fill out an application, and present a copy of their Separation Papers from Active Duty (DD-214 Form) or the WSAGO 53-55, NAVPERS 553 or NAVMC 790, along with valid photo identification. Veterans can also verify with our office if their service records are already on file with the county. There is no charge for filing military service records or for the issuance of the card. Copies of Honorable Discharges form DD-214 that have been filed with the Bergen County Clerk are available upon request to Veterans of their immediate family. Veterans who are residents of Bergen County

may apply for a Veterans Peddler License. There is no fee, but you need a copy of your DD-214. A Veteran Peddlers License is issued by the County Clerk's office in the county where the Veteran currently resides. The license allows the holder to hawk or sell goods or merchandise within the State of New Jersey without the need to apply for any additional peddler's license. For more information contact the Bergen County Clerk's Office at 201-336-7000 or via e-mail:

countyclerk@co.bergen.nj.us.

NATIONAL GUARD MILITIA MUSEUM OF NEW JERSEY



Finding Veterans, Connecting Lives: Making History at the Museum

History is about stories. Carol Fowler, Assistant Curator and Veterans Oral History Director of the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey in Sea Girt, knows that well. And sometimes the Internet can provide a surprising missing link.

"So many other stories in the past have gone untold," Fowler said. "The Internet has the ability to span years and miles."

World War II veteran John Knox of Montclair, NJ came to Fowler's attention through a 2004 Memorial Day article in the Star Ledger newspaper. She thought his story should be preserved, so she arranged an interview with him as part of the Library of Congress Veterans Oral History Program.

World War II Veteran John Knox

Knox was a company first sergeant in the 559th Quartermaster Battalion, a racially segregated unit that initially trained in the Mojave Desert. The 559th mobilized to Europe after D-Day and built stockades for the German POWs they would later guard. Assigned to General George Patton's Third Army, the 559th then served in the Battle of the Bulge, where, as Knox noted, "everyone -- clerk, cook and truck driver -- became a rifleman."

Then, in 2007, California resident Jon Merksamer was searching for information on his late father's World War II unit, and the search led him to the museum's website. There, summaries of oral history interviews are posted, and thus led Merksamer to the story of John Knox.

In email correspondence with Fowler, Merksamer recalled that his father, who was a white officer in the otherwise all-black unit, "spoke little about the war but...spoke very highly of his NCO and how efficiently he ran things." That NCO was John Knox. Fowler sent Merksamer a copy of the interview of Knox along with Knox's contact information.

Merksamer soon discovered that Knox had numerous memories of his father. In 2013, Merksamer became involved with the PBS documentary film "Sands of War", about Mojave Desert training during World War II. During the course of the production the film crew visited Knox in New Jersey and filmed his story - and Assistant Curator Fowler, who began to tell that story, was noted in the film credits. Merksamer later wrote to Fowler that: "I really owe it all to you and that article online.....so once again, thank you!!!!!!"

Merksamer concluded his message with:"As time passes and each generation becomes a bit more removed from WWII, I fear the memory of these men and women will fade.....you are certainly doing noble work in making sure that doesn't happen."

The Center for U.S. War Veterans Oral Histories is located at the National Guard Militia Museum in Sea Girt, NJ. For more information, or to schedule an interview, please contact Carol Fowler at (732) 974-5966. Veterans of all ages and from all conflicts are encouraged to share their stories to be recorded at the museum and archived at the Library of Congress Veterans Oral History Program.

Summaries of the interviews are made publicly available. The summary of Knox's story is here: <http://www.nj.gov/military/museum/summaries/wwii/knox.html>

The PBS documentary film "Sands of War", which John Knox was featured in, is available for viewing here: <http://www.pbs.org/video/2365603719/>

(Source: <http://www.nj.gov/military>)

VETERANS DAY



Shown Left: President Eisenhower signing HR7786, changing Armistice Day to Veterans Day. From left: Alvin J. King, Wayne Richards, Arthur J. Connell, John T. Nation, Edward Rees, Richard L. Trombla, Howard W. Watts .

Shown Right: Soldiers of the 353rd Infantry near a church at Stenay, Meuse in France, wait for the end of hostilities. This photo was taken at 10:58 a.m., on November 11, 1918, two minutes before the armistice ending World War I went into effect.

World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” - officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day

will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926.

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday—a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day." Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first "Veterans Day Proclamation" which stated: "In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans' organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Toward this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible."

On that same day, President Eisenhower sent a letter to the Honorable Harvey V. Higley, Administrator of Veterans' Affairs (VA), designating him as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee.

In 1958, the White House advised VA's General Counsel that the 1954 designation of the VA Administrator as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee applied to all subsequent VA Administrators. Since March 1989 when VA was elevated to a cabinet level department, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has served as the committee's chairman.

The Uniform Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates.

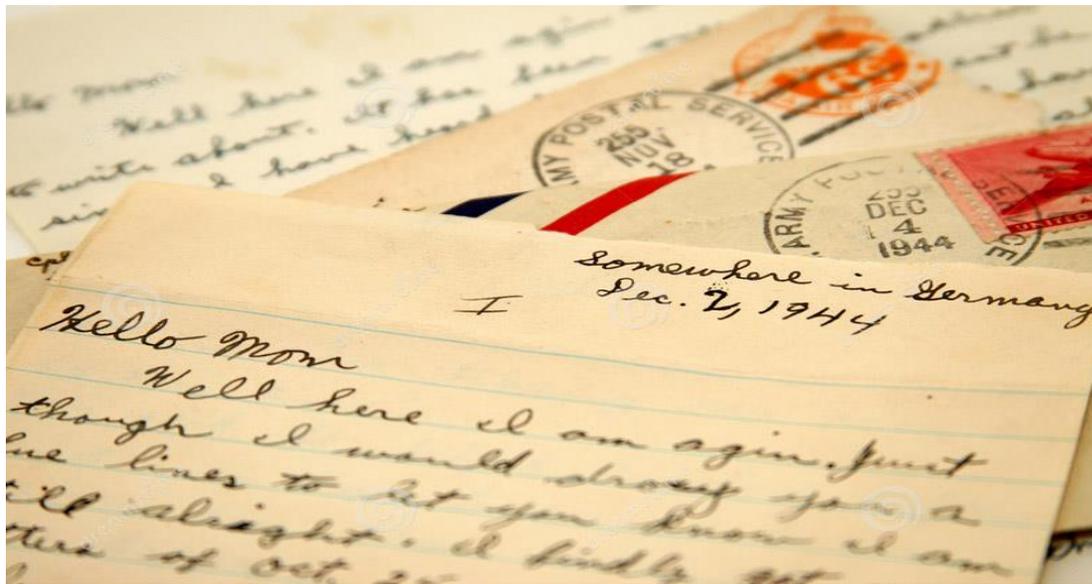
The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the

desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veteran service organizations and the American people.

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

(Source: VA Office of Public Affairs at <http://www.va.gov>)

WAR LETTERS ARE A WINDOW INTO HISTORY

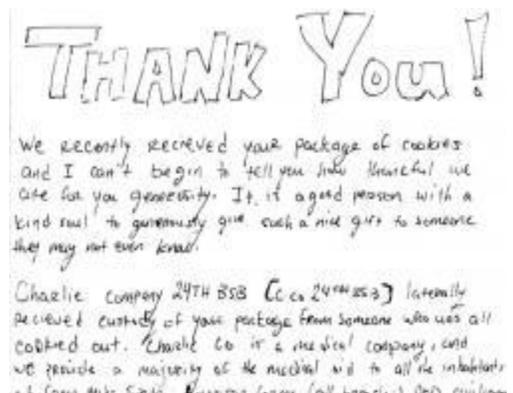


If All the Sky Were Paper was at 7:30 p.m. July 6 at the Performing Arts Center, a benefit for Dukes County Veterans Services

Mike Kotsopoulos Thursday June 30, 2016 – 12:40pm

On Wednesday evening, July 6, the Martha's Vineyard Playhouse welcomed Andrew Carroll's play *If All the Sky Were Paper* for a one-night-only showing at the Performing Arts Center. Based on the New York Times best-selling author's journey to over 30 different nations accumulating war letters, the play is literally a project born from ashes.

"I had no interest in history growing up and did not come from a military family," said Mr. Carroll. A fire at his Washington D.C. family home changed everything in 1989.



“The books, clothing, furniture were all gone, but they were replaceable,” he said. Just a sophomore at Columbia University, Mr. Carroll knew he had lost something far more valuable. “We lost all our letters from friends and family overseas which were irreplaceable.”

Attempting to fill the void left behind by the letters, distant cousin and World War II veteran James Carroll Jordan gave the family an old war letter he almost threw out days before. Dated April 21, 1945, the letter chronicled the days after Buchenwald concentration camp’s liberation and Nazi Germany’s surrender.

Mr. Carroll was mesmerized by the letter and later initiated the Legacy Project to preserve war letters. If All the Sky Were Paper includes readings of these letters along with the narrative journey of Mr. Carroll’s quest to collect them.



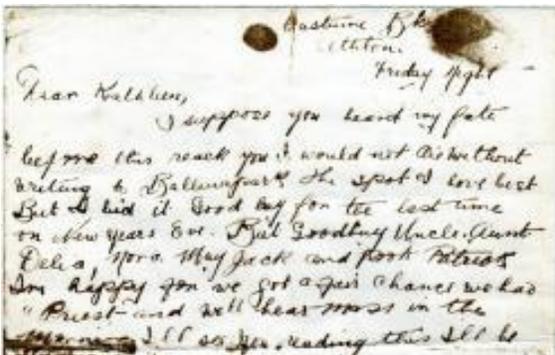
“The point isn’t about books or plays,” Mr. Carroll stressed. “The main focus is to save these war letters before they are lost forever. Letters from family members whose loved one’s are serving overseas are really overlooked.”

In an effort to accumulate as many war letters possible, Mr. Carroll reached out to the newspaper advice column “Dear Abby.” Column author Jeanne Phillips then ran an open advertisement requesting families to

contribute letters by sending them in to the project.

“It’s amazing how most of the letters aren’t about war, but human nature,” said Mr. Carroll. “The emotions of going off to war is a very timeless experience.”

The letters vary by date. Some arrived as Revolutionary War artifacts. Others arrived in fresh postal mail packages from Afghanistan. Looking to expand the project’s focus internationally, Mr. Carroll traveled to Viet Nam, Iraq and South Korea.



Mr. Carroll lived the nerve-wracking life of an American soldier when he visited Iraq in November of 2003. Members of the Taliban had bombed the hotel he stayed at just weeks before his arrival. Two weeks before returning home for Thanksgiving, Mr. Carroll narrowly escaped death.

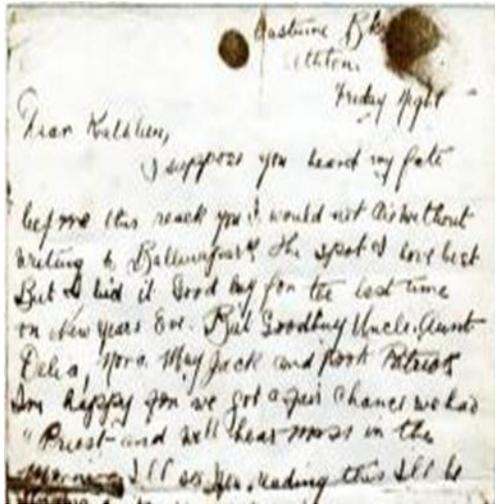
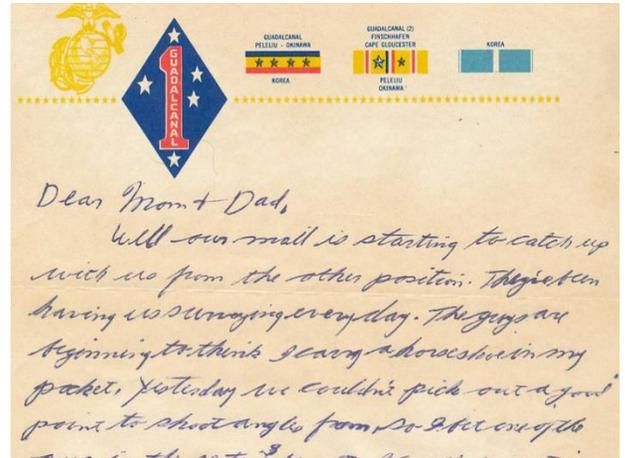
“The plane before mine was hit by a missile,” he said.

Mr. Carroll accumulated over 100,000 letters, and published *War Letters* and *Letters of a Nation* — both books received critical acclaim and became bestsellers.

The idea for a play began when Los Angeles director John Benitz saw Mr. Carroll’s adventures featured in a 2008 profile in *National Geographic*. A co-chair for Chapman University’s Department of Theatre, Mr. Benitz wanted to share Carroll’s project with a wider audience.

“There was something pretty captivating about his experiences,” said Mr. Benitz. “I thought to myself, gosh what an incredible journey.”

Mr. Benitz collaborated with Mr. Carroll on creating a script. He also directs the show, incorporating a narrator to guide the audience through Mr. Carroll’s personal journey while various actors read the war letters. The script is filled with both harrowing and humorous monologues.



“What’s pretty neat is that it becomes a personal experience for the narrator, which helps it become a personal experience for the audience,” said Mr. Benitz.

The play was workshopped in 2009 at the Odyssey Theatre in Los Angeles, had its premiere at Chapman University in 2010. The Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. and the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Los Angeles have also hosted past productions of the play.

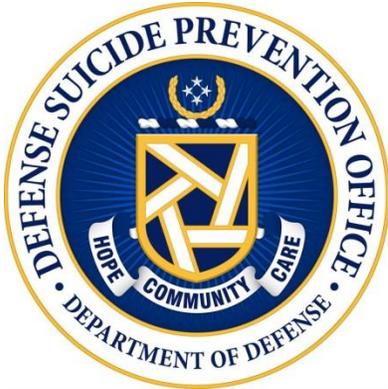
Mary Steenburg will star in the Martha’s Vineyard production as well as Garrett Schweighauser and Monique Edwards. Mr. Schweighauser originally narrated Andrew Carroll’s character during the play’s first production at Chapman University.

Mr. Carroll said wants his Martha’s Vineyard audience to encounter the same depth of feeling he felt holding that first war letter in his hand so many years ago.

“I think we take letters for granted because of the way we email and text today,” he said. “To hold those letters in your hands and know that piece of paper was held in your distant cousins’ hands is incredibly powerful.”

(Source: <http://myplayhouse.org>)

DoD Promotes Suicide Prevention Through Work With Media, Other Groups



A Message from Dr. Keita Franklin, Director

Every suicide is a tragic loss to our nation and those impacted. The family and friends left behind who must deal with the aftermath of the event and put those events in perspective, may in some cases never know why the Service member or Veteran took their life. Suicide is the culmination of complex interactions between biological, social, economic, cultural and psychological factors operating at the individual, community and societal levels. We are committed to fostering collaboration and cooperation to develop suicide prevention efforts among all stakeholders including the Military Services; Federal agencies; public, private, international entities, and institutions of higher education.

The Defense Suicide Prevention Office (DSPO) provides advocacy, program oversight, and policy for Department of Defense suicide prevention, intervention and post intervention efforts to reduce suicidal behaviors in Service members, civilians and their families.

If you are a Veteran or know a Veteran who is showing any of the warning signs below, please call the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255, chat online at MilitaryCrisisLine.net, or send a text message to 838255.

Identify the Warning Signs

Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out

Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, mood swings

Feeling like there is no reason to live

Rage or anger

Engaging in risky activities without thinking

Increasing alcohol or drug abuse

Withdrawing from family and friends.

Seek Help Immediately

If you are:

Thinking about hurting or killing yourself or

Looking for ways to kill yourself or

Talking about death, dying, or suicide or

Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse, weapons, etc.

Identify the Warning Signs

Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out

Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, mood swings

Feeling like there is no reason to live

Rage or anger

Engaging in risky activities without thinking

Increasing alcohol or drug abuse

Withdrawing from family and friends

(Sources: <http://www.defense.gov> and <http://www.dspo.mil/>)

OFFICIAL WARNS OF SERVICE CHANGES AFTER ARMY MWR CUTS

JENNIFER H. SVAN | STARS AND STRIPES Published: September 1, 2016

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Programs that support fitness, community centers, libraries and other family and recreational programs at U.S. Army installations are bracing for significant funding cuts in fiscal 2017 that will affect the level of service they can provide.

Lt. Gen. Kenneth Dahl, the commander of U.S. Army Installation Management Command, said the Army is reducing its financial support to Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs so the service can “remain combat ready.”

“This is not earth-shattering; this is not dramatic; this is not going to be very difficult for us,” he said in a five-minute video message posted to social media on Wednesday, “but I want you to

know about it upfront because you will go and see when you show up at one of these activities, there may be a change in the service delivery.”

He said patrons should start noticing changes by the end of the calendar year.

Installations are reviewing which programs are affordable and popular, with decisions on where to make reductions to be made at the garrison level.

“We’re allowing garrison and senior commanders at the local level to determine how they can absorb this reduction in funding,” Dahl said.

For many garrisons, details on what services might be cut are still pending.

In Europe, no final decisions have been made, said IMCOM-Europe spokesman Ray Johnson on Thursday, adding that announcements are expected in mid-September.

Some programs and locations won’t be affected at all. The Child Development Centers will continue to be fully supported, Dahl said. And garrisons will attempt to sustain Child and Youth Services at current levels, he said. Remote and isolated installations won’t see cuts, either, he said, “because there are no alternatives” off base.

Areas that likely will see changes include Outdoor Recreation, Arts and Crafts and Auto Skills, Dahl said.

It could be these programs reduce their operating hours, charge higher customer fees or scale back some of their services, he said.

“Perhaps you’ll go to Auto Skills and you’ll find out there’s a sign hanging there saying, ‘We’re closed on Wednesdays,’” Dahl said.

Installations might be able to avoid reductions by integrating volunteers into the work force, he said. The hit to the Army’s family and recreational budget across the Army is about \$105 million in fiscal 2017, a reduction of about 23 percent from the current fiscal year, according to Army officials.

“It’s basically a decision that’s been made on the senior Army level, the senior levels of Installation Management Command, to use funds that typically have been funding FMWR programs to use them to pay for other, more important priorities,” Fort Jackson FMWR Director Daniel Ahern was quoted as saying last month in the Fort Jackson Leader, the base’s newspaper.

Fort Jackson last month announced cuts to its family and recreational programs. A fitness center at the South Carolina base is closing, the base library will no longer be open on weekends, and recreational trips and delivery services will be reduced or eliminated, according to the base newspaper. The base will also close one of its pools next year.

Other bases in the States have also made similar announcements. The frame shop at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., was to be shuttered at the end of last month, and full-service car repairs were to be eliminated at the Auto Skills Center, according to the base newspaper.

(Source: <http://www.stripes.com>)

VETERANS WHO NEED ROUTINE AUDIOLOGY AND OPTOMETRY APPOINTMENTS WILL SOON BE ABLE TO DIRECTLY SCHEDULE



WASHINGTON
September 8, 2016

Initiative Gets Veterans Into Appointments Quicker

WASHINGTON – Veterans receiving care at Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) Medical Centers will now be able to schedule routine ear and eye appointments at local VA Audiology and Optometry clinics without a primary care referral – a move that eliminates multiple steps and gets Veterans into appointments quicker.

Before now, Veterans seeking appointments with audiologists or optometrists had to first make an appointment with a primary care physician for a referral for a routine clinic consult visit. A clinic representative would contact the patient to set up the consult appointment, which could result in a several weeks’-long lag between the appointment and when the Veteran was actually seen.

The new process, the Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative, which began as a successful pilot at three sites in 2015, is being expanded to all VA Medical Centers.

“The Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative allows Veterans who need eye and ear care to be seen sooner,” said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. “It also has the benefit of freeing up primary care physicians so access to primary care improves for other Veterans as well. This kind of process improvement is exactly the type of innovation we expected when we launched MyVA in 2014. In the end, we changed a VA process by considering the needs of our Veterans, a change that allows for more timely care and an improved Veteran experience.”

The Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative is one of a number of efforts underway at VA to improve Veterans’ access to care and wait times. Among those recent accomplishments:

VA and Choice contractors created more than 3.1 million authorizations for Veterans to receive care in the private sector from May 1, 2015 through Apr. 30, 2016. This represents an 8-percent increase in authorizations when compared to the same period in 2014/2015.

In FY 2015, 12 percent of all Veterans enrolled for VA care received telehealth-based care. This includes more than 2 million telehealth visits touching 677,000 Veterans; 45 percent of these Veterans live in rural areas.

In FY 2015, more than 6,300 Veterans accessed VA care through live interactive video telehealth from home.

VA has activated over 3.9 million square feet of space in the past two years.

We've increased authorizations for care in the community 46% in the past two years.

Clinic production is up 10 percent as measured by the same productivity standard used by many private-sector healthcare systems. This increase translates into roughly 20 million additional hours of care for Veterans.

As we improve access to care, more and more Veterans are choosing VA care — for the quality, for the convenience, or for the cost-savings even though we're completing millions more appointments, we continue to have more work to do.

VA has increased salaries for physicians and dentists to close the pay gap with the private sector and to make VA an employer of choice. With more competitive salaries, VA will be better positioned to retain and hire more health care providers to care for Veterans.

“We want our Veterans and those who care for them to know that we are doing everything that we can to improve their experience with VA and to provide the care our Veterans deserve in a thoughtful and timely way,” said VA Under Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. “We have made progress, but know there is more work to be done. This Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative is one of many initiatives underway to improve Veterans access to care.”

The Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative is expected to be fully operational within all VA Medical Centers by the end of 2016.

(Source: <http://www.va.gov>)

TFA: A LIFE-CHANGING LEGION PROGRAM

The American Legion – September 7, 2016



Photo by Lucas Carter/The American Legion

A knock on Brent Wightman's front door several years ago changed his life.

The U.S. Army veteran and father of two young children lost his job due to the inability to work after multiple back surgeries from a service-connected injury. Without a job, Wightman faced the reality of losing his home to foreclosure. After hearing of Wightman's plight, Legionnaire Howard Hudson – who has since passed – visited him to offer support through The American Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program.

"We filled out a TFA application right there and my whole life changed after The American Legion got involved," said Wightman, a member of Post 176 in Waverly, Iowa. "If it hadn't been for the Legion, I would have been trying to figure out how to clothe, house and feed my kids. The American Legion gave me a mission and a purpose again. They saved my life."

The Legion's TFA program has provided more than \$15,200,000 in cash grants to eligible veterans with minor children since its establishment in 1925. The grants – which benefit nearly 650 families and 1,500 children yearly – help families in financial need meet the costs of shelter, utilities, food, clothing and medical expenses.

Newly elected American Legion National Commander Charles E. Schmidt has made it his mission during his tenure to raise \$1 million for TFA. "It is our job to take care of veterans and to take care of their families," Schmidt said. "Touching the lives of veterans and their families is who we are."

U.S. Army veteran William Henry understands the power of TFA first-hand.

Henry had difficulty finding viable work after returning home from his second deployment in 2013. With a meager weekly unemployment check, he found himself in financial strain with the possibility of losing his home and family.

“I did what a lot of folks do when they get home from deployments and are faced with financial and family hardships – I shut down, I tried to fix it with alcohol, I became a recluse,” said Henry, a member of Post 329 in Plainfield, Ind. “I was in a really dark place in my life.”

Henry’s life positively changed once he sought mental health counseling from VA and made a plea for financial assistance on social media. “I didn’t know where to turn, but I hoped someone I knew did,” he said. “Luckily that was the case.”

American Legion Internal Affairs Division Deputy Director David Elmore, who had deployed to Afghanistan with Henry, saw his plea and reached out. Elmore connected Henry with the Department of Indiana which assisted him with filling out a TFA application. Henry not only received a TFA grant, the connection with the Department of Indiana resulted in employment due to his experience as a public affairs specialist with the Indiana Army National Guard. He was hired as the department’s communications director.

“We were so close to losing everything before Elmore contacted me; he is a great friend,” said Henry, now the department’s assistant adjutant. “I couldn’t believe or understand how everything fell into place like it did. It was divine. I got my life back. I finally felt in control again.

“The TFA program is essential to help veterans and their families. Every day I see and hear about veterans being helped by this crucial program. The TFA program changed my life and gave our family a hand up. On top of that, the Department of Indiana gave me the chance of a lifetime to assist our great Hoosier veteran families and work within the organization.”

TFA is limited to minor children (17 years or younger) whose biological parent, or legal guardian, is a veteran and is, or would have been, eligible for American Legion membership. However, Legion membership is not required. Veterans who wish to apply for a TFA grant must first contact their local Legion post.

“I’ve seen TFA change the lives of so many veterans and their families,” said Wightman, who now assists veterans with TFA grants and educates posts throughout Iowa about the program. “When they’re worried if their utilities are going to get shut off or if their kids are going to have a Christmas, I hand the (TFA) check to the veterans and see the smile on the kids’ faces. That makes it all worth it.”

TFA is funded through The American Legion’s Endowment Fund. To donate, visit <https://www.members.legion.org/tal/donatenow>.

(Source: www.legion.org)

UNLEASHED A SHORT HISTORY OF MILITARY TATTOOS

THE TRADITION IS A MAINSTAY IN AMERICAN MILITARY HISTORY



Top left: A WWI soldier shows off his tattoos. Top right: Mike Seniuk, who served in Vietnam, had the names of 17 unit members who were KIA tattooed on his arm. Bottom: A WWII-era sailor adds touch-ups to a tattoo on a fellow sailor.

August 17, 2016

This article originally appeared in the August 2016 issue of the VFW magazine.

While anthropologists cannot pinpoint one reason tattooing began or held fast over the course of humanity, one reason tattooing persists is to signify a warrior. The tradition of tattooing is a mainstay in American military history, from the Revolution to today.

The age-old practice of tattooing can be found on mummies dating as far back as 4000 B.C. Cultural anthropologists attribute the spread of tattooing or body-marking culture to a variety of human traits, ranging from religion to magic to experience and memory.

Outside of religious or ancient ceremonial trends—especially among tribal people worldwide—the connection of the body with patriotic sentiments has, for centuries, been a motivating factor in perpetuating the art of tattoo among warriors. Furthermore, some

anthropologists argue that early tattooing was a form of therapy.

“Tattoos and other permanent forms of body modification have been paramount in establishing the status and reputation

of warriors for hundreds, if not thousands, of years,” Lars Krutak, a tattoo anthropologist and the host of Discovery Channel’s Tattoo Hunter, told Medium’s “War is Boring” blog in 2014.

Romans & Tribal Markings

In Western culture, tattoos find roots in the Roman Empire. Roman soldiers were tattooed with permanent dots—the mark of SPQR, or Senatus Populusque Romanus—and used as a means of identification and membership in a certain unit.

The Greek word *Stizein* meant tattoo, and it evolved into the Latin word *Stigma* meaning a mark or brand. Typically, tattooing was associated with lower classes (criminals, slaves and gladiators) as well as Thracian (Southeastern Indo-European tribe) infantry.

Additionally, tribal warriors of the British Isles embraced the practice of tattooing. Picti people of Caledonia (now Scotland) were known as “the Painted People” because of their tattoos. Celts were known to paint their bodies with spiral motifs—recognized as Celtic knots today. Some American tribes affiliate certain “paint”—body paint, rather than puncture tattooing—with success in war.

Maori tribes of New Zealand have specific tattoo patterns and placement—known as *moko*—that tell of the wearer’s ancestry and social standing. Maori warriors would behead slaves and tattoo the heads in order to barter for weapons and ammunition from visiting Europeans during the 1700s.

“Use of paint during warfare is very common throughout North America and Australia,” wrote Wilfrid Dyson Hambly in his 1925 book *The History of Tattooing*. “The desire to impress one’s foes may be uppermost in the case of an advancing army of Indians or Australians who have used the red war paint very freely.”

Throughout Gallipoli (Turkey), Malta and France, soldiers and sailors sported markings. But the sweep of Christianity stifled tattooing in much of the Western world when, in 787 A.D., Pope Hadrian I outlawed tattooing.

Resurgence in Western Culture

In the 18th century, at the height of British colonial exploration, Capt. James Cook’s expeditions to the Far East resulted in a renewed fascination with the age-old practice of body marking. Sailors returned with permanent reminders of their travels and marks of seaward superstition.

The use of tattoos as identification continued, spreading to sailors in America. During the American Revolution, sailors’ American citizenship papers were often disregarded by British Navy ships—destroyed in some cases—so seamen tattooed their identification information as a way to avoid being illegally recruited by the British navy.

The 19th century British army commander Frederick Roberts encouraged tattoos on troops, saying: “Every officer in the British army should be tattooed with his regimental crest. Not only does this encourage esprit de corps but also assists in the identification of casualties.” (Among many campaigns, Roberts served in Afghanistan during the Second Anglo-Afghan War in 1878.)

Two prominent tattoo artists of the 19th century—Tom Riley and Sutherland Macdonald—both served in the British armed forces. Riley fought with the army in the Second Boer War in South Africa from 1899-1902, as well as Sudan, and Macdonald also served in the British Army in the 1880s.

Around the same time, British sailor George Burchett learned the art of tattooing. He joined the navy at 12 years old and, after his service and some years travelling the world, Burchett opened a tattoo parlor in England, and trained under Riley and McDonald. He eventually became known as the King of Tattooists—allegedly tattooing members of the upper class as well as royalty.

Migration to the U.S.

German immigrant Martin Hildebrandt is believed to have opened the first tattoo shop in New York City in 1846. He travelled the country tattooing Civil War soldiers. Civil War veteran Wilbur F. Hinman wrote in his novel *Corporal Si Klegg and His Pard*: “Every regiment had its tattooers, with outfits of needles and India-ink, who for a consideration decorated the limbs and bodies of their comrades with flags, muskets, cannons, sabers and an infinite variety of patriotic emblems and warlike and grotesque devices.” Hinman served with the Ohio 65th Volunteer Infantry. This trend of tattooing military servicemembers persisted. It’s said that even Smedley Butler sported a tattoo of the Marine Corps emblem.

“Interesting cases of present-day employment of tattooing to express social solidarity are common enough among soldiers,” Hambly wrote.

“Military men not infrequently mark themselves with something which shows allegiance to their profession, for example, the date of a battle, cross-guns, a flag, a cannon, or a pyramid of bullets. Naval men prefer a ship or an anchor, and sometimes the marking does not merely connect the wearer with some particular army, but further identifies him with a certain corps. Thus a cavalryman tattooed a horse on himself.”

Hambly claims in his book that at the time of publication (1925) some 90% of U.S. Navy sailors were tattooed.

The popularity of tattooing in port towns throughout the U.S. stirred the tattoo business. In 1918, August Coleman—“Cap” as he was known among his clients—opened a tattoo parlor in Norfolk, Va., making a living by tattooing sailors. Franklin Paul Rogers, who became known for his development of modern tattooing machinery, studied under Coleman from 1945-50.

As a child, Rogers met a Spanish-American War veteran who was heavily tattooed, and the future father of American tattooing got his first tattoo at 21 in 1926. He is best known for his “old-school” tattooing style, modeled by such current tattoo artists as Ed Hardy.

Norman Keith Collins—known best as “Sailor Jerry”—was highly influential in the American tattooing world. He served in the Navy, joining in 1930, and traveled much of Southeast Asia. He learned about the practice, becoming influenced by the culture and tattooing style of that area. His style shaped tattoo trends throughout the U.S. in the mid-20th century and remains popular today.

Superstition and Tradition

After WWI, tattooing lost its social status, though continued to be a mainstay in the military.

“Two reactions seem to be possible in persons who see a tattoo on someone,” wrote Samuel M. Steward, a prominent tattoo artist during the mid-20th century, in his book *Bad Boys and Tough Tattoos: A Social History of the Tattoo with Gangs, Sailors and Street-Corner Punks, 1950-1965*.

“One is complete fascination, a feeling that here is the ultimate stud, the great macho...the far-traveling sailor...The other is a complete revulsion: the tattoo represents the epitome of sleaze...everything that intelligence and sophistication have conditioned you to despise.”

For many, superstition and tradition played a role in motivating U.S. troops to get tattoos. Certain symbols represented the location a sailor had been—dragons for Asia, hula girls for Hawaii, a fully rigged ship for Cape Horn. Others symbolized a sailor’s job or experience—a swallow for

every 5,000 miles sailed, an anchor for a boatswain or chief. Some sailors believed tattooing a pig and a rooster on the arches of each foot would prevent them from drowning.

“In order to express sympathy for a shipmate, one sailor had tattooed a picture of a steamship over which were the words, ‘Empress of Ireland,’” Hambly wrote.

The practice remained popular, however, throughout the Korean and Vietnam wars.

“On summer weekends the sailors flocked into my shop in such numbers that it was necessary to have a policy of ‘Navy first,’ requesting the city boys to come back later, or on another day,” Steward wrote.

Irving Berlin even wrote a song about it. “A Sailor’s Not a Sailor (‘Til A Sailor’s Been Tattooed)” was performed by Ethel Merman.

Tattoos Today

Indeed, the topic of tattooing in the U.S. Navy (as well as all military services) has become more divisive in recent years. A 1986 issue of *All Hands* (the official magazine of the Navy) published an article imploring sailors to reconsider getting a tattoo. Though for the modern veteran, tattoos from during and after their military service tell a story and can be used as a form of therapy or recognition.

Such projects as *Service Ink* (see the May 2016 issue) have emerged, encouraging veterans to tell their stories via tattoo. VFW Post 9488 supports a program called Operation Tattooing Freedom, which provides free tattoos as a means of cathartic release for veterans experiencing PTSD or chronic pain.

“A month out of boot camp [in 1999], I had 11 tattoos—typical sailor tattoos,” said Lewis Hunt, former commander at Post 9488 in Charlotte, N.C. “When I’m getting tattooed, I tend to go to a neutral place. The worries of the world go away, and I can be in the moment.”

Hunt himself suffered from PTSD as a result of his service in Afghanistan from 2001-02. He had been on sleep medications for five years and was having issues at home that were affecting his family.

“I talked with my tattoo artist for awhile,” Hunt said. “He was also a veteran. We talked about what we’d dealt with, where we were at. When I got up from getting that tattoo, I felt so much better. My issues didn’t go away, but I was able to work through it. I realized how much that tattoo positively affected other parts of my life.”

In 2009, the Army reported that some 90% of combat soldiers had at least one tattoo—a much higher percentage than the one in five people in the general population with a tattoo. Themes typically included pride in service, patriotism, unit identification and memorials.

Army Regulation 670-1 has been updated frequently in the past few years—most recently no longer limiting “the size or number of tattoos soldiers can have on their arms and legs.” (Army Times, April 10, 2015.) Air Force regulations (AFI 36-2903) allow tattoos as long as they are not excessive (defined as visible in uniform on more than 25% of the exposed body part). As of April 2016, the Navy’s current regulations allowed sailors to sport one neck tattoo and full sleeves (tattoos covering the entirety of a person’s arm).

“Society is changing its view of tattoos, and we have to change along with that,” former Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno told Military Times in April 2015. “It makes sense. Soldiers have grown up in an era when tattoos are much more acceptable, and we have to change along with that.”

(Source: <http://www.vfw.org>)

BERGEN COUNTY REACHES GOAL: ALL VETS IN COUNTY HAVE OR WILL GET HOUSING

BY TODD SOUTH
STAFF WRITER | THE RECORD



HACKENSACK – As officials gathered outside the county courthouse Wednesday to celebrate the success of a program aimed at ending veteran homelessness, two members of the target population stood nearby, one who’d been helped by the county before the coordinated framework of federal money and agencies existed, and another afterward.

The former took nearly a year to get settled, the latter, three weeks.

Vincent Weston is a U.S. Army veteran who lost his job after 30 years due to back injuries last year. He is one of 100 local veterans housed recently through a federal-local program to end veteran homelessness.

Holly Leicht, regional administrator for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development., announces an end to veteran homelessness in the county on Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2016.

The regional director for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development announced Wednesday that Bergen County had met the federal standard for “functional zero,” a designation that means all of the identified homeless veterans in the county have been housed or are in the process of being housed.

There are more than 800 communities nationwide who’ve signed on to President Barack Obama and First lady Michelle Obama’s initiative to end veteran homelessness. Bergen County was the 28th to achieve the goal.

Including Bergen County and nearby Paterson, there are at least four counties and 32 municipalities in New Jersey who are participating in the “Mayor’s Challenge” first issued by the White House in 2014. Bergen is the first in the state to achieve the “functional zero” mark.

County Executive James Tedesco said at the event that citizens have a “moral obligation to ensure that at the absolute minimum (veterans) have a safe and a warm place to call home in the nation that they protected.”

Local U.S. Air Force veteran Denise O’Brien and her wife spent a month living in the woods in Bergen County before they found shelter at the county’s Housing, Health and Human Services Center in Hackensack.

“It was horrible,” O’Brien said. “There were just no jobs, no money.”

She’d left a manual labor job after long-term joint pain and other medical conditions left her unable to do physical labor. Her wife Bonnie had sent their 7-year-old daughter to live with the child’s father.

The couple stayed in the shelter for nearly a year before they were placed in a subsidized apartment in Garfield, where they still live six years later and their daughter is able to visit.

Center Director Julia Orlando said that O’Brien, 46, was the first veteran the shelter was able to house. This was before federal housing vouchers for veterans had become readily available and before many among her staff had worked with both the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and local nonprofit groups, both hallmarks of the Obama initiative.

Contrast O’Brien’s experience with the story of U.S. Army veteran and Teaneck native Vincent Weston. Last August, the 52-year-old had been injured on the job, suffering herniated disks and was later being diagnosed with sciatica, preventing him from continuing to work as a chef, a job he’d held for more than 30 years, he said.

After a falling out with family, he went to the shelter, he said.

Just three weeks later, he was in his own apartment in Hackensack, where he still lives.

“My feet are underneath me now,” he said, smiling. Weston said that his doctor is happy too because his blood pressure is down from the highs it hit during his homeless days.

It took the county and local groups a year to reach the stated goal of the “Mayor’s Challenge” — ending veteran’s homelessness by the end of 2015 — mostly through a combination of monthly meetings with nonprofit and government groups. The deadline stretched for everyone, in part due

to funding delays in Washington D.C., said Holly Leicht, regional director for HUD offices in New York and New Jersey.

Where before homeless veterans might get help with some additional health or social service programs, the added federal funding and coordinated effort has brought about concrete timelines that measure how successful providers are in their efforts.

The new program strives to have a homeless vet in the shelter as soon as possible, in transitional housing within 30 days and in permanent housing within 90 days.

The annual homelessness survey in 2015 counted 17 homeless veterans in Bergen County, five of them living on the street, according to HUD data. The same count showed 10 this past January, all of which were in transitional housing with permanent housing plans in place, Leicht said.

Nicola Burnett, the VA's homeless services manager for New Jersey, said that 1,185 homeless veterans have been housed in the state since July 2015, 100 of them in Bergen County.

(Source: <http://www.northjersey.com>)

TRACERS: HELPING BERGEN COUNTY'S HOMELESS VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES FOR OVER 23 YEARS

Established in November 1993, "Tracers" has provided over clothing, McDonald's & Shop Rite gift certificates, shoes, VA canteen books, and other items essential to homeless veterans.



Whether the veteran needs bus tickets for job interviews, transportation to social services agencies or to employment obtained, "Tracers" is there to assist. Because of your donations, the lives of homeless veterans in Bergen County are improving, one veteran at a time.

If you or your organization would like to make a donation, checks should be made payable to "County of Bergen - Tracers" and sent to "Tracers", One Bergen County Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hackensack, NJ 07601-7076. \$25 or \$50 gift certificates, redeemable at stores in Hackensack such as Sears, Shop Rite, and Target are also welcome. Gift certificates allow the veteran to purchase clothing, shoes, etc. in their exact size, as well as male or female personal items required.

\$10.00 McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Dunkin Donuts or Burger King gift cards, which are available for purchase at the counter, are greatly appreciated by our homeless job seekers. Packages of VA One Dollar Canteen Books are also a welcomed donation and available at VAMC East Orange, Third Floor PX.

Questions call the Division of Veterans Services at (201) 336-6325, weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Among many programs, VA has created a national hotline for homeless veterans – 1-877-424-3838 – which is staffed around the clock, seven days a week. Responders can help callers find food, shelter, clothing, and other assistance for homeless veterans.

THANKS TO TRACERS BENEFACTORS

(PRIOR TO 8/25/2016)

Gold (\$500 and above):

- Fundraiser Wrestling LLC
- VFW Post 850 Glen Rock
- Catholic War Veterans Post 1710

Silver (\$250 - \$499):

- Ridgefield Park/Bogota Rotary Club

Bronze (\$100 - \$249):

- Tom Lemond
- McDonald's of Hackensack
- David & Joan Boesch

Boosters (Under or up to \$99):

- Sarah Onello

RECENT DONATIONS DRIVES FOR TRACERS

Our veterans are thankful all year round for every item that they receive through the generosity of all the organizations in Bergen County. Special thanks to all our supporters and most recently those who conducted various clothing, household supplies and food gift card drives.

Joan Carlson and VFW Auxiliary Post 277 Ridgefield Park
Cynthia Spadola and American Legion Auxiliary Post 365 Fairview
Reverend Stico, Parishioners of Our Lady of Grace Church & Union of the Catholic Apostolates
Debbie Emery of the Bergen Volunteer Center & Staff and benefactors

BERGEN COUNTY REMEMBERS THOSE LOST ON 9/11

SEPTEMBER 11, 2016

BY SARA JERDE

NJ ADVANCE MEDIA FOR NJ.COM

Despite the heat, dozens gathered Sunday at a public park to honor the victims of the World Trade Center attacks, remembering the day 15 years ago when 147 Bergen County residents died.



The crowd sat in a tent set up near the WTC memorial in Overpeck County Park in Leonia to remember the lives lost in the worst terrorist attack in the history of the nation. Speeches were given by local clergy, TAPS was played by a retired sheriff officer, "Amazing Grace" performed by a bagpiper and a 21 gun salute was given.

"We do not forget them, we will never forget them. We will always be here for them and we will always be here for the loved ones that pray for them," said James Tedesco, Bergen County executive.

As a number of children sat in the crowd, Tedesco said he thought it was important to

tell the stories of what happened on 9/11 to children who weren't yet born or don't remember the events of the day.

Directly across the Hudson River from One World Trade Center, religious leaders spoke of a need for solidarity.



The New York Classical Youth Orchestra performed as the names of the victims were read off by public safety representatives, officials within the community and family members of the victims. As the names were read, local girl scout troops placed carnations on the memorial.

Elaine Asciak was the first to begin reading names, ending by saying her late husband's, Michael A.

Asciak. "Michael, we miss you. We love you dearly and we wish you were here with us each and every day," she said.

Sara Jerde may be reached at sjerde@njadvancemedia.com. Follow her on Twitter @SaraJerde.

(Source: <http://www.nj.com>)

BERGEN COUNTY ENGLEWOOD MAN HONORED AT ANNUAL POW/MIA DAY CEREMONY IN HACKENSACK

SEPTEMBER 15, 2016
BY TODD SOUTH
STAFF WRITER | THE RECORD

HACKENSACK – Growing up in their Englewood home, Murray Ulrich's children reveled in their father's quick wit and way with a joke. They absorbed his commitment to peace during the Vietnam War. They never questioned why he always sat with his back to the wall, would get sick at the sight of blood and would sometimes fly into a rage without warning. That was just dad.



It wasn't until years after he died that they connected his behavior with the fact that their father had been a World War II veteran and POW camp survivor. He had never talked about it much.

Only in the days leading up to the POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony — held Friday at the Bergen County Administration Building that honored Ulrich's service and time as a prisoner — did more details emerge.

A.J. Luna, director of the county's Division of Veterans Services, learned about Ulrich while talking with his daughter Stefanie Ulrich, who heads the Center for Psychological Services for Fairleigh Dickinson University in Hackensack where she also counsels veterans.

Ulrich, who died in 1998 at age 81, had never before been publicly recognized for his service, his son David Ulrich said. Murray didn't belong to the Veterans of Foreign Wars or the American Legion as far as the family knows. He didn't march in local parades or dot the walls of his Englewood business Royal Glass and Millworks with certificates or awards.

Murray gave Stefanie, his youngest daughter, his Purple Heart when she was a child to use as a plaything.

David remembers his dad counseling young men who faced the draft during Vietnam about their options to not fight in what he considered an unjust war.

When he did talk about his time in the war it was lighthearted, even if the humor was of the gallows variety. Like how he and other prisoners would urinate in the German vehicles to stall the engines. Or how, when his officers would say, when lining a dangerous reconnaissance mission, that only two out of 10 men would likely survive, he would reply "me and which other guy?"

Shortly before the ceremony, Stefanie, 54, recalled how as a child she would be embarrassed when her dad wore sandals because his two big toenails were missing.

Decades later she would learn that German prison guards had pulled them out after he and other soldiers had escaped a work detail and been recaptured.

Over her time counseling veterans she's often seen some of her father's own behavior and experiences reflected in the stories they tell.

"The sad part today is my father's not here for me to say 'I honor what you did and I understand why you screamed sometimes,'" Stefanie said before the ceremony.

Stefanie and David learned much of what they know during recent conversations with from their father's assistant, Debbie Koslow, 59, of Fairview, who worked with Murray for decades at his business.

Koslow said that Murray wouldn't talk about the war often but sometimes a passing thought would spur questions, he'd pause, put his fingers to his lips and then share a small detail.

He told of landing in the second wave on Omaha Beach and having to crawl among dead bodies, waiting for the raking machine gun fire to pass before inching forward.

He shared how the guards would starve them so much they would gather and boil grass to eat.

He described how he tossed away his dog tags just before being captured because they were marked with the single letter "H" denoting Hebrew for his Jewish religion.

Some details still escape the children. They don't know what unit their father served in, if he was drafted or volunteered or which camp he survived.

They learned from the National Archives listing that he was reported as a POW in January 1945 and liberated in February, 1946

That's how they know he spent 383 days in captivity.

Stefanie knows he was taken in Vianden, Luxembourg because when she was backpacking through Europe in the early 1980s she called each week to say where she was headed.

On one call Murray told her if she was near Vianden to visit, that's where he was captured.

She tried in vain, not speaking German to explain to local villagers that her father had fought there.

(Source: <http://www.northjersey.com>)

VETERANS DAY MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION



There are no words that can adequately reflect our gratitude and repay the debt we collectively owe to the men and women who served in the U.S Armed Forces and continue to serve us to this day. The best words to commemorate this day are simply to say to our veterans: **Thank You.**

Thank you for your sacrifice and your commitment to your country, your bravery on the battlefield, for putting your lives on the line and your personal lives on hold while you protected America's interest around the globe. And thank you for giving us the freest nation on earth - the shining beacon of hope for the rest of the world.

For the past 240 years, beginning when our colonialist first embraced the fight for liberty, Americans have made an unwavering commitment to freedom and a pledge to fight tyranny wherever it exists in the world. When the call to arms has come, American men and women have answered, willingly and unselfishly.

The unique American commitment to Liberty has never waned, no matter what the price. And the price has been steep for many individuals and their families.

Millions of American families have been heartbroken by the loss of a loved one who fought and died in uniform - and millions more have been forced to live with wounds, both physical and psychological that have afflicted our U.S. servicemen and women.

The families who stand by proudly while their sons and daughters serve the cause for freedom deserve our thanks today too. They live with fear every day for their children. We pray that their sons and daughters will be returned safely to them.

And so, at the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month, we pause to remember and thank our veterans.

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS FOR JUSTICE (VLJ) TAKING CASES, CHANGING LIVES

Volunteer Lawyers for Justice (VLJ), a civil legal services organization, introduces a new FREE legal clinic in Newark for Veterans and Military Personnel.

In partnership with PSE&G, VLJ has established the **Military Personnel/Veterans Legal Assistance Project** (MLAP) to provide pro bono legal counsel and limited scope representation to both veterans and active duty military personnel. At the clinics, volunteer attorneys from PSE&G, as well as those from McCarter & English LLP and Gibbons PC, will assist a range of legal matters, including driver's license restoration, expungement of criminal records and child support issues, among others. PSE&G is providing funding for this program.

Legal clinics will assist with NEW Jersey State:

- Criminal Record Expungement
- Driver's License Restoration
- Child Support Modification
- For eligibility and intake information :

Please call VLJ at (973) 645-1955.

"Serving Bergen County Veterans Since 1977"

BERGEN **NEW JERSEY**
County

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF VETERANS SERVICES

One Bergen County Plaza, 2nd Floor

Hackensack, NJ 07601-7076

Phone: (201) 336-6325

Fax: (201) 336-6327

E-mail: veterans@co.bergen.nj.us

www.co.bergen.nj.us/veterans

October 2016

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| | | | | | | 1 -Ridgewood AL 53 |
| 2 -New Milford-Teaneck JWV 498 -Fair Lawn JWV 651 -Fort Lee JWV 741 | 3 -N. Arlington AL 37 -Ridgefield Pk AL 40 -Waldwick AL 57 Aux -Cliffside Park AL 126 -Teaneck VFW 1429 -Hasb Hgts AL106 -Westwood AL 206 | 4 -Rutherford AL109 -Lyndhurst AL 139 -Fort Lee Post 2342 -Bogota VFW Post 5561 -Bergenfield VFW 6467Aux -Teaneck VFW 1429 -Carlstadt AL 69 | 5 -Englewood AL 58 -Rochelle Park AL Riders 170 -S. Hackensack VFW 8005 -Hillsdale AL 162 | 6 -Fairview Post 365 Aux -Rochelle Park AL 170 -Marine Corps League Gooney Bird Detachment 434 -Elks 2167 -Elks 2475 -Hackensack AL 55 -Lyndhurst AL 139 | 7 -Fair Lawn SAL 171 | 8 -DAV Chapter 32 |
| 9 | 10 -Rutherford AL 109 -Teaneck SAL 128 -Elmwood Pk AL 147 | 11 -Bogota VFW 5561 Aux -Bergenfield VFW 6467 -Edgewater AL 116 -Little Ferry AL 310 | 12 -Waldwick SAL 57 -Rochelle Park SAL 170 -Ho-Ho-Kus VFW 192 | 13 -Waldwick AL57 -Rochelle Park 170 Aux -Lodi AL136 -Glen Rock AL 145 -Park Ridge AL 153 -Emerson AL 269 -Fairview AL 365 | 14 -Fair Lawn AL 171 Aux -Fair Lawn AL 171 | 15 -Paramus AL 207 -Paramus VFW 6699 |
| 16 -Rutherford AL 453 | 17 -VVA Chapter 800 -Saddle Brook AL 415 | 18 -DAV Chapter 15 -Lyndhurst AL 139 -Cresskill AL 21 -Bogota AL 117 -Norwood AL 272 | 19 -Rutherford SAL 109 | 20 -Elks 2167 -Elks 2475 -Mahwah AL 531 -N.Arlington VFW 4697 -Oradell AL 41 -E Rutherford AL 67 -Lyndhurst AL 139 | 21 -Maywood AL 142 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 -DAV Chapter 49 | 25 | 26 -Oakland AL 369 -District 2 -Ridgefield AL 221 | 27 -Teaneck AL 128 -Wood-Ridge VFW 3616 - Pompton Lakes Marine Corp Detachment 744 -Teaneck AL 128 | 28 | 29 |

November 2016

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| | | 1 -Rutherford AL109 -Lyndhurst AL 139 -Fort Lee Post 2342 -Bogota VFW Post 5561 -Bergenfield VFW 6467Aux -Teaneck VFW 1429 -Carlstadt AL 69 | 2 -Englewood AL 58 -Rochelle Park AL Riders 170 -S. Hackensack VFW 8005 -Hillsdale AL 162 | 3 -Fairview Post 365 Aux -Rochelle Park AL 170 -Marine Corps League Gooney Bird Detachment 434 -Elks 2167 -Elks 2475 -Hackensack AL 55 -Lyndhurst AL 139 | 4 -Fair Lawn SAL 171 | 5 -Ridgewood AL 53 |
| 6 -New Milford-Teaneck JWV 498 -Fair Lawn JWV 651 -Fort Lee JWV 741 | 7 -N. Arlington AL 37 -Ridgefield Pk AL 40 -Waldwick AL 57 Aux -Cliffside Park AL 126 -Teaneck VFW 1429 -Hasb Hgts AL106 -Westwood AL 206 | 8 -Bogota VFW 5561 Aux -Bergenfield VFW 6467 -Edgewater AL 116 -Little Ferry AL 310 | 16 -Waldwick SAL 57 -Rochelle Park SAL 170 -Ho-Ho-Kus VFW 192 | 10 -Waldwick AL57 -Rochelle Park 170 Aux -Lodi AL136 -Glen Rock AL 145 -Park Ridge AL 153 -Emerson AL 269 -Fairview AL 365 | 11 Veterans Day -Fair Lawn AL 171 Aux -Fair Lawn AL 171 | 12 -Northern Valley Chapter 32 of the DAV |
| 13 | 14 -Rutherford AL 109 -Teaneck SAL 128 -Elmwood Pk AL 147 | 15 -DAV Chapter 15 -Lyndhurst AL 139 -Cresskill AL 21 -Bogota AL 117 -Norwood AL 272 | 23 -Rutherford SAL 109 | 17 -Elks 2167 -Elks 2475 -Mahwah AL 531 -N.Arlington VFW 4697 -Oradell AL 41 -E Rutherford AL 67 -Lyndhurst AL 139 | 18 -Maywood AL 142 | 19 -Paramus AL 207 -Paramus VFW 6699 |
| 20 -Rutherford AL 453 | 21 -VVA Chapter 800 -Saddle Brook AL 415 | 22 | 30 -Oakland AL 369 -District 2 -Ridgefield AL 221 | 24 Thanksgiving | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 -DAV Chapter 49 | 29 | | | | |

December 2016

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|
| | | | 1 - Englewood AL 58 -Rochelle Park AL Riders 170 -S. Hackensack VFW 8005 -Hillsdale AL 162 | 1 - Fairview Post 365 Aux -Rochelle Park AL 170 -Marine Corps League Gooney Bird Detachment 434 -Elks 2167 -Elks 2475 -Hackensack AL 55 -Lyndhurst AL 139 | 2 - Fair Lawn SAL 171 | 3 - Ridgewood AL 53 |
| 4 - New Milford-Teaneck JWV 498 -Fair Lawn JWV 651 -Fort Lee JWV 741 | 5 - N. Arlington AL 37 -Ridgefield Pk AL 40 -Waldwick AL 57 Aux -Cliffside Park AL 126 -Teaneck VFW 1429 -Hasb Hgts AL106 -Westwood AL 206 | 6 -Rutherford AL109 -Lyndhurst AL 139 -Fort Lee Post 2342 -Bogota VFW Post 5561 -Bergenfield VFW 6467Aux -Teaneck VFW 1429 -Carlstadt AL 69 | 7 - Waldwick SAL 57 -Rochelle Park SAL 170 -Ho-Ho-Kus VFW 192 | 8 - Waldwick AL57 -Rochelle Park 170 Aux -Lodi AL136 -Glen Rock AL 145 -Park Ridge AL 153 -Emerson AL 269 -Fairview AL 365 | 9 - Fair Lawn AL 171 Aux -Fair Lawn AL 171 | 10 - Northern Valley Chapter 32 of the DAV |
| 11 | 12 - Rutherford AL 109 -Teaneck SAL 128 -Elmwood Pk AL 147 | 13 -Bogota VFW 5561 Aux -Bergenfield VFW 6467 -Edgewater AL 116 -Little Ferry AL 310 | 14 - Rutherford SAL 109 | 15 - Elks 2167 -Elks 2475 -Mahwah AL 531 -N. Arlington VFW 4697 -Oradell AL 41 -E Rutherford AL 67 -Lyndhurst AL 139 | 16 - Maywood AL 142 | 17 - Paramus AL 207 -Paramus VFW 6699 |
| 18 - Rutherford AL 453 | 19 -VVA Chapter 800 -Saddle Brook AL 415 | 20 - DAV Chapter 15 -Lyndhurst AL 139 -Cresskill AL 21 -Bogota AL 117 -Norwood AL 272 | 21 - Oakland AL 369 -District 2 -Ridgefield AL 221 | 22 - Teaneck AL 128 -Wood-Ridge VFW 3616 - Pompton Lakes Marine Corp Detachment 744 -Teaneck AL 128 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 Christmas Day | 26 - DAV Chapter 49 | 27 | 28 | 29 - | 30 | 31 |

VETERAN'S CLOTHING CLOSET



*Serving our Nations
Veterans*



The **Veteran's Clothing Closet** is a place for our **male and female Veterans** to get back on their feet – We provide **FREE** clothing, hygiene products and small household items for our Veterans. Whether you are looking for a single pair of jeans or a full suit for a job interview, the Veterans Clothing Closet has you covered.

Passaic County Location: 435 Main Street, Paterson, NJ 07505

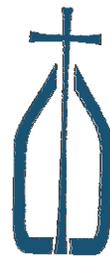
Hours: By appointment only: Call Carl Perry at 973-592-1393

Hudson County Location: American Legion Post 99,
314 Belgrove Dr., Kearny, NJ 07032

Hours: By appointment only: Call Carl Perry at 973-592-1393

Sussex County Location: 48 Wyker Rd, Franklin NJ

Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



*Catholic Charities in
the Diocese of Paterson and
the Archdiocese of Newark*

*"...providing help—
creating hope..."*

BINGO

Fall Bingo Night

Fundraiser to Benefit

**Unmet Needs Fund
(to assist veterans in need)
&**

**Other Local Community Groups
(Hosted by VFW Auxiliaries - NJ District 3)**



**Extra Bingo
Sheets
Available**

**Saturday, October 22nd
St. Stephen's Church
141 Washington Ave. Kearny
Doors Open @ 6:00 PM
Bingo Begins @ 7:00 PM**

**Drinks &
Snacks
Available**

**Cost: \$25.00 per person in advance
Includes: One sheet for each game
(Must be 18 years or older to play)**

**Pre-Register at: EventBrite.com/FallBingoNight
Contact via email at: vfwpost1302@gmail.com**

Prizes, Money & Fun!

Proud Supporter of VFW:



75 Ridge Rd. North Arlington, NJ
201-991-1030

www.na.minutemanpress.com
art1@minutemanpress.com

MARKETING PROMOTIONAL CREATIVE SIGNS

STUFF A BACKPACK FOR A HOMELESS VET

American Legion Post 170

33 W Passaic St.

Rochelle Park, NJ

(201) 843-9683

Drop off September 1 ~ October 31

Every day from 8 AM ~ 10PM

Backpacks should contain all new items

Long johns, heavy socks, gloves, hoodies, and flannel shirts

Sweatshirts and pants, warm hats, scarves

Small size toiletries such as toothpaste and brushes, deodorant

Hand and face lotion, handi-wipes, playing cards

Gently used winter outdoor wear such as boots, shoes and coats will also be accepted.

**REMEMBER OUR VETS WHO HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN...MEN AND WOMEN
WHO SERVED OUR NATION AND ARE NOW FORGOTTEN**

YOU CAN TAKE THE MAN OUT OF THE WAR
BUT YOU CAN'T TAKE THE WAR
OUT OF THE MAN.

Support Project Help
And share your feelings
with us. CALL



Catholic
Charities
USA

Working to Reduce Poverty in America

PROJECT HELP
A Division of Catholic Charities USA





RED, WHITE AND BLUE DANCE
TO BENEFIT OUR SCHOLARSHIP FUND
NOVEMBER 19, 2016 – 7-11 P.M.
LOCATION-VFW POST 809,
100 MAIN STREET, LITTLE FERRY, NJ
TICKETS \$35.00
DELICIOUS BUFFET
DRAFT BEER, SODA, CASH BAR
GET YOUR TICKETS NOW
CALL COLIN ON 201-410-3705
OR
MARGARET ON 201-460-8614



Special Honors Fundraiser

Two-Time Purple Heart Recipient, Dave Cathcart

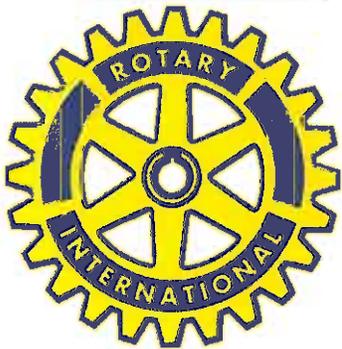
Rotary District Gov. & Veteran, Steve Jarahian



DJ Music

Catered by
Outback Steakhouse
of Edgewater

To Benefit: Military Family Assistance Program



Rotary Club of Fort Lee
"Service Above Self"

Friday, December 9th, 6:30pm

Fort Lee Recreation Center

bottom of Stillwell Avenue

Fort Lee, NJ ~ \$50 per person ~

RSVP: John Mitchell, President, Fort Lee Rotary

201-543-7801 • mitchellj69@gmail.com

checks payable to **Fort Lee Rotary Charity** IRC: §501(c3) tax deductible



JOIN US FOR THE FIFTH ANNUAL VETERANS



STAND DOWN *in* MORRISTOWN

November 3, 2016 11:00AM to 3:00PM

NEW LOCATION!
UKRAINIAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER
60 NORTH JEFFERSON ROAD, WHIPPANY, NJ

Offering at-risk and homeless veterans
FREE Supportive Services, Care and Resources:

- ☆ VA benefits
- ☆ clothing
- ☆ employment assistance
- ☆ flu shots
- ☆ dental screenings
- ☆ HIV testing
- ☆ housing referrals
- ☆ legal resources
- ☆ meals
- ☆ personal care/hygiene kits
- ☆ professional hair cuts
- ☆ and much more!



REGISTER, VOLUNTEER OR DONATE AT:
www.communityhope-nj.org/events.stand.down.php

